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From original Painting by E. A. Burbank — Copyrighted, Brush & Pencil, Chicago, 1899

CHICAGO CULTURE CO.

HONG-EE

In costume of Katchina-Cha-vey-oh. He presides at the annual ceremony and gives good advice to the people, instructing them how to live. Unruly boys are brought before him and are frightened into future good behavior by his hideous mask and threats.

BRUSH AND PENCIL

VOL. IV

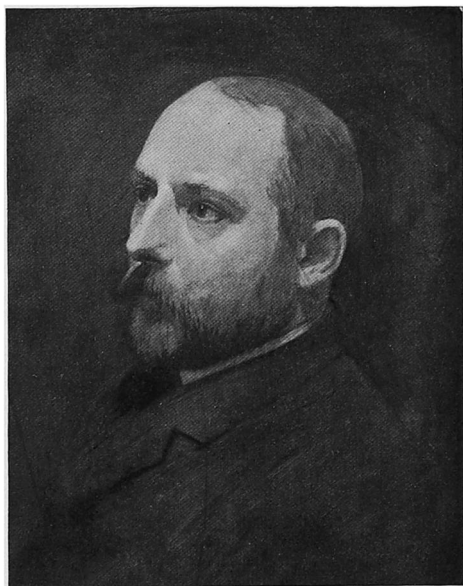
SEPTEMBER, 1899

No. 6

AN UNASSUMING PAINTER—THOMAS P. ANSHUTZ

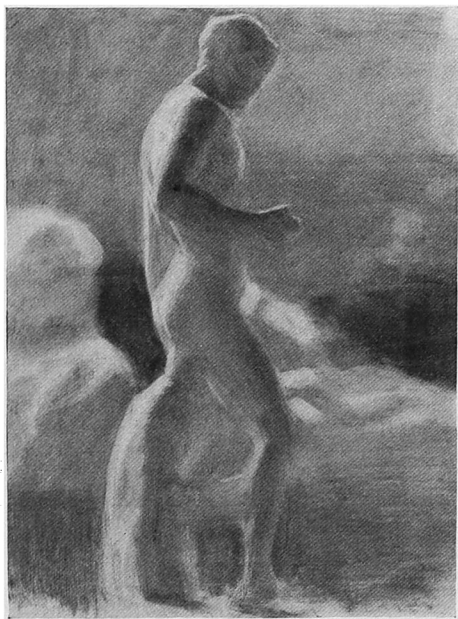
No member of the artistic fraternity of the Quaker City is known better to his fellows than Thomas P. Anshutz, a quiet, unassuming painter, whose talents deserve a much wider recognition than has been accorded them as yet by the world at large. This lack of appreciation is partially due to the fact that the artist has given much of his time to teaching, instead of devoting all his efforts to creative work. Mr. Anshutz himself looks upon this state of affairs as the most natural thing possible, for his modesty is such as leads him to belittle the merit of his own handicraft, where those of coarser mold beat him in the race for fame by lauding their own inferior productions to the skies. He has confidence in his own ability to do good work, but he will tell you that he has accomplished little in his chosen field, although he expects to achieve something worth the while before many months are passed.

The artist's associates estimate his power at a higher value. If you inquire his capabilities from his fellow members of the Sketch Club, they will point out to you a series of portraits adorning their cozy quarters as sufficient answer to your question. There are quite



A SKETCH CLUB PORTRAIT, BY THOS. ANSHUTZ

a number of these canvases—about a score as I remember them—and they extend around three sides of the room, forming a frieze from which the painted counterfeits of the club's members look down upon their flesh-and-blood originals. As works of art these portraits are of unequal merit, as is but natural, for their painting has extended over quite a range of years; but the most casual glance at the collection,



CHARCOAL DRAWING FROM THE ANTIQUE
BY THOS. ANSHUTZ

by one who knows good work when he sees it, shows them worthy of study. True, at times, the color is not all that could be desired, but in all of these portraits one is struck by the way in which the painter has caught the character of his sitters. One feels the individuality of each of these pictured faces, whether acquainted with the originals or not, and recognizes them almost as old friends.

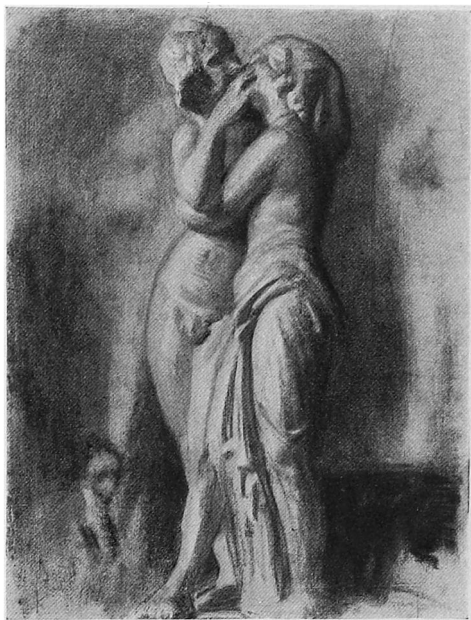
For years Mr. Anshutz has been a valuable member of the faculty of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. His ideas concerning the relationship of pupil and teacher are somewhat original. "Any student who has any-

thing in him at all is a valuable man to work alongside of," he told me the other day, and it is his custom to spend considerable time with paper and charcoal in the midst of such of his academy students as are wrestling with the beautiful difficulties of the antique, or trying to catch character and color in the sketch class. In fact, there is a rather unusual degree of intimacy between the work of this teacher and that of his pupils, an intimacy which Mr. Anshutz asserts is quite as beneficial to him as to the members of his class. Some of the studies of the antique made by Mr. Anshutz during class hours at the academy are exceedingly interesting, differing considerably from the conventional academic drawing. It is true that

they are mere sketches, the hasty productions of an hour, but the subjects are treated in an original manner and the drawings characterized by what I can describe best as a "painty" use of the charcoal. The handling is with bold masses of light and shade rather than with the point, and the introduction of a studio background, showing other casts or a group of busy students, makes these sketches resemble studies for pictures, rather than the productions of the class-room.

In Mr. Anshutz's private studio one finds landscapes associating with portraits, genre paintings, and still-life studies, while pastels and water-colors seem as numerous as oils: a combination which led me to ask the artist whether he affected any particular medium or preferred any set line of subjects. He had no choice, and his characteristic answer was that it didn't make much matter what medium one used or what one chose to portray so long as one was learning how to paint. "Learning how to paint," and this from the man who is responsible for the Sketch Club portraits!

Mr. Anshutz's art is strictly American. He is not given to the artistic sin of dressing up Italian models in the costumes of French peasants and then painting them against a native background. No such disregard of the unities can be laid at his door. His subjects are such as he finds ready to hand—and this brings me to the story of his first picture. About a score of years ago Mr. Anshutz happened to be in Wheeling, West Virginia, and while there was struck with the picturesque possibilities of an iron foundry. He picked his models from among the sturdy workmen (no easy matter, he found, to win their confidence, for at first they looked upon him askance), and proceeded



CHARCOAL DRAWING FROM THE ANTIQUE
BY THOS. ANSHUTZ

to paint "The Iron Workers' Noon-Day Rest." It is a small canvas, 17x24, but it contains a number of figures, and for each the artist made innumerable studies. It is not a "pretty" picture, this depiction of a group of half-naked men clustered outside the grim walls of the rolling-mill, washing up preparatory to lunch, and at the present day the painter himself does not set much store upon it, but at the time it was painted it marked a departure in American art. Exhibited in New York, it caught the eye of Thomas B. Clarke, who finally became its owner. Before that time, however, "The Iron Workers"



ON THE DOCK, FROM A WATER-COLOR, BY THOS. ANSHUTZ

had a narrow escape from annihilation at the hands of its maker. It came back from the exhibition unhonored by a single offer, and in a fit of artistic discouragement, Mr. Anshutz decided to destroy it by covering the same canvas with another painting. Fortunately something stayed his hand until the day Mr. Clarke walked into his studio with the demand to see some of the artist's work. He was looking for the "Iron Workers" which he carried off to add to his New York collection. Shortly after this the painting was made the subject of an illustration in one of the principal New York periodicals, which referred to it as one of the pictures of the year. Still later—such is fame—another reproduction, this time one in colors, appeared as a soap advertisement, a circumstance which Mr. Anshutz cynically

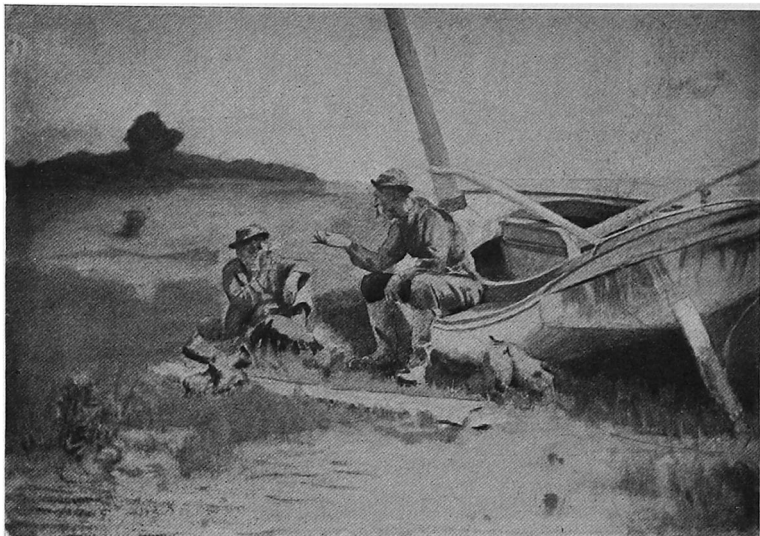


CHARCOAL DRAWING FROM THE ANTIQUE
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remarks, called much more attention to the original than its purchase by Mr. Clarke.

Had the "Iron Workers" found a purchaser earlier than it did, it is probable that Mr. Anshutz would have given us additional pictures dealing with similar subjects. Unfortunately he allowed himself to become disheartened at the outset, and abandoned a line of which one cannot help thinking regretfully would have been prolific of important results.

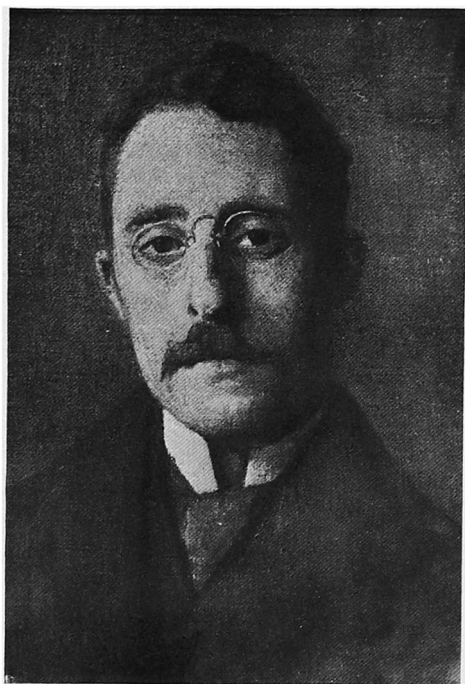
Mr. Anshutz's recent work includes two pastel studies of his little



A SAILOR'S YARN, FROM A WATER-COLOR, BY THOS. ANSHUTZ

son, one of which was exhibited last year in Chicago. "The Little Artist" is in a brown study over paper and pencil, and the childish gravity is capitally rendered. The other pastel referred to shows the same boy busy with his blocks, and is remarkable for freshness of color rather than for careful draughtsmanship. A reproduction in monochrome would not do it justice, as it is more of a study of values than a finished work of art—despite which it has a charm all its own.

Mr. Anshutz's career is so closely associated with the art of the Quaker City that one is apt to think of him as a native-born Philadelphian. As a matter of fact he comes from the Blue Grass State, his birthplace being Newport, Kentucky, where he first saw the light of



A SKETCH CLUB PORTRAIT, BY THOS. ANSHUTZ

day on October 5, 1851. His artistic education was begun at the Academy of Design in New York and continued at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts under the instruction of Thomas Eakins. Mr. Anshutz himself became a member of the academy's faculty in 1881, a position which he has filled ever since, except during a twelve-month spent in Paris, where he worked under Doucet and Bouguereau.

Written descriptions of pictorial art must, in the nature of things, prove unsatisfactory, and even photographs cannot convey much that belongs to their originals. Still, I hope that these few remarks, taken in conjunction with the accompanying illustrations, will at least prove the statement made in the beginning of this article, to the effect that Thomas P. Anshutz is a painter whose talents deserve more general recognition.

FRANCIS J. ZIEGLER.